



RMC Health Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Time: 10:00 am to 11:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Committee Chair Sara Seitz, Noelle Flaherty, Yolanda Hipski, David Stewart, Nan Mann, Melissa Kelly, Karan Verno, Neal Reynolds, John Hartline, Linda Kohler, Carmella Watkins, Alex Chan, Dan Schneckenburger, Dana Burl, Monica Escalante, Steven Tuttle, Nikki Majewski, Chris Abel, Erin Dorrien, Dianna Abney, Charlotte Davis, Amanda Clevenger, Megan D'Arcy.

Committee Chair Sara Seitz welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 10:03am. Chair Seitz asked for approval of the July 27, 2023 meeting minutes. Noelle Flaherty moved the motion to approve the 7/27/2023 meeting minutes, Yolanda Hipski seconded the motion. The 7/27/2023 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

The Committee discussed the mission and vision for the group and Chair Seitz reviewed thoughts that were generated at the last meeting. These included 1) advocacy and making connections around rural health; 2) improving access to health with specific topics that included telehealth and broadband; workforce development; reaching Marylanders where they are such as mobile integrated health and community clinics; 3) health in the framework of community development and how integral conversations on health and the connection to healthcare impacts all. The Committee commented on these three areas. Comments included making workforce development a priority; creating an inventory on all the workforce development efforts that are taking place statewide; and focus on the interconnectedness of these priority areas.

The Committee discussed the group's values that included inclusion, equity, strong focus on social drivers of health, advocacy, and innovation. Committee Chair Seitz will draft a value statement and share it with the Committee at the next meeting.

Alex Chan with the University of Maryland Extension shared information on the Regrounding Our Response series that focuses on the health of people that use drugs - [Regrounding Our Response - MarylandROPTA](#).

Charlotte Davis stated that telehealth has been a long-time priority for RMC and that Committee Chair Sara Seitz has started a Statewide Telehealth Interest Group that meets quarterly. Chair Seitz shared the link to the Maryland State Office of Rural Health where the meeting dates are posted - <https://health.maryland.gov/pophealth/Pages/Rural-health.aspx>. Ms. Davis informed Committee members about Senate Bill 534 – Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2023 and stated that RMC supports this bill which focuses on keeping the temporary COVID related expansions in telehealth. Nikki Majewski with the Health Care Commission provided an update on the report that was submitted to the Legislator in December with several recommendations. These recommendations include continuing the expanded coverage of telehealth with additional study requirements understanding the payment parody piece for the future.

Yolanda Hipski with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland provided an update on the Health and Human Services Roundtables that were held in fall and stated that the final report will be coming next month. Ms. Hipski stated that because of this work, two bills are on the floor this legislative session – Senate Bill 511 and House Bill 596, Health and Human Services Transportation Improvement Act of 2023.

Chair Seitz reported that the Office of Rural Health recently put out a bid to help develop the 2023 Rural Health Plan and Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) was the selected vendor. MRHA will be holding a series of regional Stakeholders Engagement Meetings and encouraged committee members to attend. The Plan is due by June 30, 2023. Chair Seitz stated that the plan is intended to have SMART goals and that the Department of Rural Health and RMC plan to highlight success stories that stem from the Plan.

Charlotte Davis shared that the Council is contracting with the University of Maryland Institute for Government Service and Research to redevelop their rural issues survey instrument and the Council will be reaching out to all their committees to develop questions related to their expertise.

The Committee discussed the meeting schedule and decided to meet quarterly on the 4th Wednesday at 10:00am with the next meeting taking place on May 24, 2023, at 10:00am.

Committee Chair Sara Seitz thanked everyone for attending the meeting and ended it at 10:55am.